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Frances Hester to Fanny Jones, 18 September 1873

Freemantle

Sept 18th 1873

My dearest Fanny

I trust you won't think me very unkind for not writing you before, I have been very ill indeed, I left home on the 23rd of May to stay some time with Dear Uncle Ander and the poor motherless children, I caught a most severe cold when I was coming to Branson when I had been there about three weeks I was laid up first I had Dysentery I was so ill that the Dr advised my Uncles to send for Dear Papa who was only four days coming from Blackwood Park to Branson I cannot tell you how extremely kind Uncle Frank and Ander were to me Uncle Frank used to sit with me all day and half the night, I never can forget his kind attentions to me, he nursed me as dear Mama would have done I was in bed for nineteen days, poor dear Uncle Ander was obliged to be away at his farming work, just when I was recovering from Dysentery I got a severe attack of hooping cough as soon as I could move about Papa who stayed at Branson a fortnight, with Uncle Frank took me to Aunt Sophy's (Woongong) and I stayed there eight days the Miss Bickleys who live in Freemantle invited me to stay with them I have been here since the 31 of July. Mr and Mrs Bickley and the girls have all been as kind and attentive as though they were my own sisters when I first came I was obliged to take [?wine] four times every day, the boys at Wongong are so fond of me they want me to go back now, I am thinking of going down to Nicol Bay where Aunt Hannah [?lives] Uncle Shake has been down there more than [?ten] months Uncle Ander came to see me today, I am going to stay three weeks with Mrs Alick Manning who was Florence Bickley, and expect to enjoy myself they live four miles out of town, she has two children one boy and a girl, Florence sings and plays beautifully, Mr Mannings mother was a [?Spaniard] he is very dark, I have just finished copying a long piece called [*indecipherable*] by Adah Isaacs Menken, so that must account for my [?badly] written letter Uncle Shake is at Nicol Bay I have sent him a long letter by this mail My dearest Fanny I should be so much obliged if you would send me a book of Adam Lindsay

Gordon's poems called Sea Spray and Smoke Drift, if you do please
direct it to Uncle Anders as I shall be there for some time We went for a
picnic yesterday across to the point and enjoyed it very much, Mr and
Mrs Hetherington who leave shortly for Melbourne were there. With
much love to dear Aunt, Uncle and cousins I remain
Your loving cousin
Frances